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Title

Social Media Use in Healthcare Nonprofit Organizations

Abstract

Social media are becoming an important tool for building and sustaining relationships among people and groups (Kanter & Fine, 2010). More and more nonprofit organizations (NPOs) started using advanced social media strategies to help raise money, mobilize volunteers, raise awareness, persuade decision makers, and encourage positive behavior changes (Miller, 2010). However, a comprehensive literature review indicates that the effectiveness of social media use by NPOs lacks systematic investigations and most studies have focused on human services NPOs.

The proposed study intends to fill this gap and explore the integration of social media into the marketing efforts of healthcare nonprofit organizations (HCNPOs). HCNPOs' revenues and expenses represent about 60% of total public charity revenues and expenses in the U.S. (Urban Institute National Center for Charitable Statistics, 2015). They are also one of the fastest growing NPOs in the U.S. in terms of financial terms.

Marketing is crucial for HCNPOs to advocate and to raise citizen's health awareness. The study aims to answer two research questions: (1) How do HCNPOs integrate social media into their marketing efforts? (2) Does the use of social media improve the organizational effectiveness of HCNPOs?

To answer the research questions, the authors conducted a survey of 886 HCNPOs with annual revenue of $25,000 or above in California in 2017. IRB approval was acquired before the distribution of the survey. Both quantitative and qualitative methods are used to analyze the data.
Since this study is largely an exploratory research that tackles a new problem, we expect to discover a range of specific social media marketing strategies used in the NPOs and estimate their impact on organizational effectiveness. The findings of this study not only contribute to the literature, but also provide valuable resources for nonprofit practitioners to successfully implement social media initiatives and help them improve the effectiveness of their organizational performances.

**Keyword**

Social media, healthcare, nonprofit